

Three Creeks Trail

Innovative Storm Water Management

San José's Three Creeks Trail uses a variety of innovative storm water management techniques to capture rainfall and minimize impacts on nearby rivers and creeks.

Preserve and Plant Trees

Landscaping plan includes a doubling of trees from master plan to project completion. Many mature trees were strategically preserved during clean-up of the former railway corridor. Strict construction protocols minimized compaction of root systems. Native tree species were part of the trail's landscaping, and non-native flowering trees were added to gateways to recall and honor the site's relationship to local orchards.

Minimize impervious features

Non-pervious paved trail and gateways met minimum space requirements – all other pavement was minimized. Several interpretive areas are found along the trail that include pervious surfacing.

Maximize the site's attributes

- Avoid compaction: The relatively level site was retained rather than being altered for basins, thereby minimizing future soil compaction.
- Prepared soils: Plans specified that the site soils be ripped to facilitate percolation.
- Reduced Earth Work and off-site dumping: Minimized the need to redistribute the spoils since no bio-retention areas were constructed.
- Increased Mulch Depth: Specified 3" of mulch cover to increase water retention.
- Maximized Site-Appropriate Landscape: The landscape plan maximizes the use of native and drought-tolerant trees along the corridor.
- Reduced Costs: Minimized long term maintenance, costs and water use (no need to maintain bio-retention plantings with special irrigation or maintenance protocols).

Self-treating and self-retaining areas

Approximately 70% of the site remains as open space with permeable soils or surfaces. These spaces are designed to be self-treating.

